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Farm Broadcasters Letter

United States Department of Agriculture Office of Information Radio-Television Division Washington D.C. 20250 (202) 447-4330

Letter No. 2410

April 28, 1989

RADIO WINS WITH FARMERS -- Of all the so-called agricultural media, radio is the most heavily used and the first choice of farmers and ranchers. That's what the "Doane Media Usage Among Farmers" survey found last winter, according to the current issue of CHATS, from the National Association of Farm Broadcasters.

The study compared and evaluated radio, general ag publications, newspapers, network and local TV, enterprise special publications, video cassette recorders, direct mail, ag newsletters, regional farm publications, satellite TV, electronic ag information services and cable TV.

Radio is the only medium that increases in usage during the critical spring, summer and fall months. Contact: Roger Olson, NAFB executive director (612) 224-0508.

U.S. FARMLAND VALUES INCREASED an average of 6 percent from February 1988 to February 1989. This follows a 3 percent increase a year ago. The February 1989 value per acre was \$597 per acre: which is \$50 an acre higher than the recent low of \$547 in 1987. However, the 1989 figure is still 27 percent below the record \$823 per acre set in 1982. Source: Ag Resources Outlook & Situation Summary (481-89). Contact: Roger Hexem (202) 786-1428.

NEW ROACH KILLER LICENSED BY EPA -- Sulfluramide, a compound USDA scientists discovered was 90 percent effective in killing ants and roaches, has been approved for commercial use by EPA and is now in commercial production by Griffin Corp., Inc., of Valdosta, Ga. USDA entomologist Clifford S. Lofgren said the compound, which is formulated as a slow-acting insecticide bait, may also have potential against imported fire ants and termites. Consumers currently spend between \$500 and \$600 million annually to control household ants and roaches. Contact: Clifford S. Lofgren (904) 374-5920.

EXTENSION TO CELEBRATE 75TH -- USDA's Extension Service kicks off a year-long celebration of the 75th anniversary of the federal act that formed the Cooperative Extension System May 8. Extension Service will hold a national videoteleconference Monday, May 8, to begin the celebration. Featuring live appearances by Sec. Clayton Yeutter and Extension Administrator Myron Johnsrud, the event will run from 3 to 4:15 p.m., EDT, and will be downlinked across the country. Extension Service is also planning open houses in conjunction with the event. The system was formed when President Woodrow Wilson signed the Smith-Lever Act, May 8, 1914. Contact: Judith Bowers (202) 447-4241 or Cathy Selberg (202) 447-6074.

BELTSVILLE SYMPOSIUM TO STUDY RHIZOSPHERE -- More than 250 scientists from around the world will examine recent findings and research priorities on the rhizosphere -- the zone of soil which surrounds plant roots -- at USDA's 14th annual symposium in Beltsville, Md., May 8 through 11. According to Donald L. Keister, who is coordinating the symposium, the rhizosphere is a crucial, but little-known, part of Earth's ecosystem. Contact: Donald L. Keister (301) 344-1723; for schedule information, contact: Maggie Blackwell (301) 344-1727.

TRANSITIONING OUT -- Peter C. Myers, deputy secretary of agriculture for former Secretary Richard Lyng, will join the National Pork Producers Council May 8 as its Washington executive director of public affairs. The council represents the nation's hog producers on a wide range of lobbying and regulatory issues.

CORN USE CONFERENCE -- The National Corn Growers Association and Funk Seeds International will hold their Corn Utilization Conference III in St. Louis, Mo. in 1990. Contact: Ann Birne (314) 275-9915.

BACTERIA STILL MAIN CULPRIT -- With all the present-day furor about pesticides and other contaminants of the nation's food supply, consumers need to give more attention to the biggest health threat of all -- bacteria. According to Al Wagner, a food technologist with the Texas Agricultural Extension Service, there are between 21 to 81 million cases of food borne illnesses each year in the U.S. "Bacteria are common on raw foods, but proper care and handling will eliminate most problems," Wagner said. For food-handling tips at home, contact Wagner on (409) 845-7341. USDA contact: Susan Rehe (202) 447-9113.

NEW TECHNOLOGIES always have consequences. And, livestock growth hormones are no exception. Although consumers should benefit from lower prices, hormone use will encourage structural trends in the livestock industry. A new USDA study looks at the potential changes these hormones could cause. Source: "Issues Raised by New Agricultural Technologies: Livestock Growth Hormones." Contact: Fred Kuchler & John McClelland (202) 786-1456.

STOP AND EAT THE ROSES -- If rushing through daily routines makes life seem drab, maybe you need to stop and eat the roses. "Flowers can add flavor, texture, color and fragrance to many types of dishes," says Susan Reynolds, a foods specialist at the University of Georgia. You may not have realized it, but when you eat broccoli and cauliflower, you're already eating flowers. Popular flowers now are violets, carnations, chrysanthemums, lavender, some roses, day lilies, tulips, marigold petals, nasturtiums, gladiolas, lilacs, calendula petals, orange blossoms and squash blossoms. But, a caution: "Never eat flowers from the retail florist," says Reynolds. "They may have been treated with chemicals." Contact: Dan Rahn (912) 681-5637.

FROM OUR RADIO SERVICE

AGRICULTURE USA #1664 -- A new buzzword in landscaping is developing as a result of the recent drought. It's called "Xeriscaping." On this edition of AGRICULTURE USA, Brenda Curtis talks with Texas A&M University extension horticulturist Doug Welsch about this new landscaping concept. (Weekly 13-1/2 min. documentary)

AGRITAPE #1653 -- USDA news highlights; rice payment options; additional deficiency payments; biocontrol safety; genetic engineering; rice situation in China affects world markets. (Weekly reel of news features)

CONSUMER TIME #1145 -- "Xeriscaping;" barley in beer won't cut cholesterol; the costs of organic foods; USDA recall of turkey franks; black market birds. (Weekly reel of 2-1/2 - 3 min. features)

USDA RADIO NEWSLINE -- Tuesday, May 9, weekly weather & crop update; Thursday, May 11, U.S. crop production, Soviet crop production, world supply & demand; Friday, May 12, farm labor, world ag/grain production, world oilseed situation, world cotton situation, livestock & poultry outlook.

DIAL THE USDA RADIO NEWSLINE (202) 488-8358 or 8359.
Material changed at 5 p.m. EDT each working day.

FROM OUR TELEVISION NEWS SERVICE

AGRICULTURAL UPDATE and USDA NEWS SERVICE are available on satellite Westar IV, audio 6.2 or 6.8:

THURSDAY 7:30-7:45 p.m., EDT, Transponder 12D

SATURDAY 10:30-11:15 a.m., EDT, Transponder 10D

MONDAY 8:30-9:15 a.m., EDT, Transponder 12D
(Repeat of Saturday transmission)

OFF MIKE

GOOD NEWS...from Dan Gordon (Tennessee Agrinet, Nashville) who says that the planting situation overall in his area is positive. Ground moisture is 25 percent above normal in the western portion. Activity is about on schedule despite a series of days with record high temperatures.

MILO AND CORN...is in the ground, rice is 80 percent planted, some cotton started but we're begging for rain says James Guthrie (KFIN, Jonesboro, Ark). A wet spring helped winter wheat to begin heading but yields are not expected to equal last year's record amount. Rice growers are flushing fields to get the plants up.

DRY...is the word says Jim Stewart (KFYO, Lubbock, Texas). Farmers are ready to plant but ground moisture is insufficient. Thunderstorms are splitting around the region. Irrigated producers doing OK.

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25th ANNIVERSARY...of the FarmHouse fraternity at Mississippi State was observed in April. Doug Thomas (Progressive Farmer Network, Starkville) will serve as an advisor to the Chapter. NORTH CENTRAL...regional meeting of NAFB is scheduled for June 28-July 1 at the Hilton in Sioux City, Iowa. Regional VP Doug Cooper (KWMT/KKEZ, Fort Dodge, Iowa) notes the Thursday night theme is the 50's & 60's.

NICE LETTER...of thanks to President Bush for participating in the USDA audiobridge news conference April 18 has been sent by Rich Hawkins, (KRVN, Lexington, Neb.) chairman of the NAFB radio committee. Rich also wrote in the letter that farm broadcasters look forward to the president's participation in similar conferences in the future.



VIC POWELL, Chief, Radio & Television Division